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TELEGRAM INFORMATION REPORT TELEGRAM

CENTRAL-INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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CLASSIFICATION — DISSEMINATION CONTROLS

CONFIDENTIAL**NO FOREIGN DISSEM/NO DISSEM ABROAD BACKGROUND USE ONLY****COUNTRY** SOUTH VIETNAM**REPORT NO.** TDCSDB-3/656,842

SUBJECT 1. NGO DINH NHU INTENTION TO DEAL WITH VC **DATE DISTR.** 24 SEPTEMBER 1963
 2. ATTEMPTS OF PHAM NGOC THAO TO ARRANGE THE INVASION OF SOUTH VIETNAMESE AIR FORCE SUPPORT FOR A COUP D'ETAT

PRECEDENCE ROUTINE**DATE OF** 9-20 SEPTEMBER 1963**REFERENCES** IN 26062**INFO.**

SOME TIME DURING 1961 HE HAD BEEN CONSIDERING DEALING WITH THE VIET CONG

PLACE & VIETNAM, SAIGON (22 SEPTEMBER 1963)

DATE ACCORDING TO THE COMMUNISTS WHO CLAIM HE WOULD BE EXCHANGED FOR VIET CONG

APPRaisal SEE BELOW FIELD REPORT NO. FVS 9684

THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION. SOURCE GRADINGS ARE DEFINITIVE. APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.**SOURCE** A FIELD GRADE VIETNAMESE AIR FORCE OFFICER (F).

INTELLIGENCE WOULD TELL HE HAD BEEN CONSIDERING DEALING WITH

APPR: IT IS PROBABLY TRUE THAT THAO HAS PLANNED A COUP AND HAS SOUGHT VNAF

HE HAS BEEN REPORTEDLY THE SUBSTANCE OF THAO'S TALKS WITH DIEM AND NHU CONCERNING

NHU'S CONTACTS WITH THE VIET CONG AND NHU'S PLANS FOR MAJOR CHANGES IN THE SOUTH

VIETNAMESE ECONOMY CANNOT BE ACCURATELY JUDGED. IT IS DOUBTFUL THAT NHU WOULD

MAKE A DEAL WITH THE COMMUNISTS ALTHOUGH THAO IS APPARENTLY CONVINCED THAT NHU

IS CONSIDERING SUCH ACTION. IT IS NOT TRUE THAT AMBASSADOR LODGE TALKED WITH THAO

1. SUMMARY. ON 20 SEPTEMBER 1963 LIEUTENANT COLONEL PHAM NGOC

2. ON 10 SEPTEMBER WHO ENTRANCED INTO AND WORKED WITH NHU HE HAD

THAO, ASSIGNED TO THE PRESIDENCY AS AN INSPECTOR FOR THE STRATEGIC

HAMLET PROGRAM, SAID THAT HE HAD TALKED SEPARATELY WITH PRESIDENT

3. NHU WHO COMMUNIST MET WITH NHU BECAUSE THE GENERAL SECRETARY

DIEM AND NGO DINH NHU ABOUT NHU'S CONTACTS WITH THE VIET CONG (VC)

4. NHU WHO HAD TOLD THAO THIS INFORMATION THAO REPLIED THAT NHU HAD

AND THAT NHU HAD ADMITTED THAT HE WAS "CONSIDERING DEALING WITH"

THE COMMUNISTS WITH THE ACT THO SAID THAT NHU HAD ADVISED AND ADVISED

THE COMMUNISTS." THAO CLAIMED THAT NHU WAS PLANNING MAJOR

5. HE BELIEVE DIEM HAD BECAUSE HE REPLIED THAT NHU HAD

CHANGES TO MAKE THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE ECONOMY MORE SIMILAR TO

6. HE RELATED THAT THE PRESIDENT HAD SWIFTLY REPLIED BY TELLING THAT

THE ECONOMIES OF COMMUNIST NATIONS. THAO HAS SOLICITED VIETNAMESE

7. NHU WHO TALKED WITH NHU HAD TALKED AND ADVISED DA THE SECRETARY

AIR FORCE (VNAF) SUPPORT FOR A COUP D'ETAT AGAINST THE DIEM REGIME.

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GROUP I
Excluded from automatic
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(WHEN FILLED IN)

NO FOREIGN DISSEM/NO DISSEM ABROAD BACKGROUND USE ONLY

TDCS DB-3/656,842

IN 26062

PAGE

2

(5)

5

THAO SAID THAT NHU'S PLANS TO DEAL WITH THE COMMUNISTS MUST BE FORESTALLED.

2. THAO SAID THAT DURING THE WEEK 9-15 SEPTEMBER PRESIDENT DIEM SUMMONED HIM AND ASKED HIM HOW HE, DIEM, WAS REGARDED BY THE PEOPLE. THAO REPLIED THAT THE PRESIDENT WAS STILL PERSONALLY POPULAR BUT THAT THE PEOPLE DISLIKED NHU BECAUSE THEY BELIEVED THAT NHU WAS IN CONTACT WITH THE VC. THAO SAID THAT DIEM WAS ANGERED AND DEMANDED TO KNOW WHO HAD TOLD THAO THIS INFORMATION. THAO REPLIED THAT THIS OPINION WAS COMMONLY HELD BY CIVIL SERVANTS, THE GENERAL PUBLIC, AND THE AMERICANS.

3. ON 16 SEPTEMBER NHU SUMMONED THAO AND ASKED HIM WHY HE HAD TOLD THE PRESIDENT OF NHU'S CONTACTS WITH THE VC. THAO BELIEVED THAT NHU HIMSELF HAD TOLD AMERICAN AMBASSADOR LODGE AND THAT LODGE HAD SUBSEQUENTLY INFORMED THAO. NHU CALMED DOWN AND LATER IN THE SAME INTERVIEW ADMITTED THAT HE HAD BEEN "CONSIDERING DEALING WITH THE COMMUNISTS." THAO CLAIMED THAT HE TOLD NHU THAT NHU DID NOT UNDERSTAND THE COMMUNISTS AND THAT HE WOULD BE PLAYING A DANGEROUS GAME IN DEALING WITH THEM. (FIELD COMMENT. AMBASSADOR LODGE HAS NEVER MET THAO.)

4. THAO SAID THAT NHU PLANNED TO MAKE MAJOR CHANGES DURING THE COMING MONTHS, INCLUDING THE NATIONALIZATION OF BANKS AND PRIVATE ENTERPRISES, WHICH THAO SAID, WOULD MAKE SOUTH VIETNAM'S ECONOMY MORE SIMILAR TO ECONOMIES OF COMMUNIST COUNTRIES. (FIELD

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CONFIDENTIAL

(WHEN FILLED IN)

NO FOREIGN DISSEM/NO DISSEM ABROAD BACKGROUND USE ONLY

TDCS DB-3/656,842

IN 26062

PAGE

3

COMMENT. THAO DID NOT STATE THE SOURCE OF HIS INFORMATION CONCERNING NHU'S PLANS.) ACCORDING TO THAO, NHU'S CONTACT WITH THE COMMUNISTS WAS VIA THE POLISH DELEGATION TO THE INTERNATIONAL CONTROL COMMISSION. THAO SAID THAT NHU'S PLAN TO DEAL WITH THE COMMUNISTS MUST BE FORESTALLED.

5. ON 20 SEPTEMBER 1963 THAO SPOKE TO A RANKING VIETNAMESE AIR FORCE (VNAF) OFFICER CONCERNING THE POSSIBILITY OF THE VNAF SUPPORTING A COUP D'ETAT AGAINST THE DIEM REGIME. THAO SAID THAT:

- A. THE VNAF WOULD NOT BE INVOLVED IN ANY FIGHTING BECAUSE RESISTANCE BY GOVERNMENT FORCES WOULD BE OVERCOME IN THREE HOURS.
- B. THE COUP LEADERS WANTED THE VNAF TO HINDER OR STOP THE FORCES OF BRIGADIER GENERAL HUYNH VAN CAO, IV CORPS COMMANDER FROM ASSISTING FORCES LOYAL TO THE DIEM REGIME.

6. THAO WANTED VNAF SUPPORT TO STOP CAO ALTHOUGH HE BELIEVED THAT CAO MIGHT NOT NOW SUPPORT THE PRESIDENT AS STRONGLY AS IN THE PAST. HE GAVE THE FOLLOWING REASONS FOR THIS JUDGEMENT:

- A. CAO DID NOT ESTABLISH MARTIAL LAW IN THE IV CORPS AFTER THE PROCLAMATION ESTABLISHING MARTIAL LAW IN THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY ON 21 AUGUST.
- B. RECENTLY, CAO HAS KEPT HIS TROOPS HEAVILY COMMITTED IN OPERATIONS AGAINST THE VC.
- C. CAO APPEARED TO BE REMAINING ALOOF FROM EVENTS IN SAIGON.
- D. CAO HAS MADE REPEATED REQUESTS TO THAO TO VISIT HIM AND

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| | | | | PAGE 4 |

HAS OFFERED HIS PRIVATE AIRCRAFT TO THAO FOR SUCH A VISIT.

7. THE VNAF OFFICER WHOM THAO APPROACHED REPLIED THAT COLONEL HUYNH HUU HIEN, VNAF COMMANDER, WAS COMPLETELY LOYAL TO THE REGIME AND, PARTICULARLY, TO NGO DINH NHU. HE ALSO TOLD THAO THAT IT WAS VERY DIFFICULT TO PREDICT WHAT ACTION VNAF OFFICERS WOULD TAKE IN THE EVENT OF A COUP. THAO REPLIED THAT IF HIEN FAILED TO COOPERATE, HE COULD EASILY BE KILLED.

8. FIELD DISSEM. STATE (AMBASSADOR LODGE) USMACV (GENERAL HARKINS) CINCPAC PACFLT ARPAC PACAF

LOCK YOURSELF OUT OF THE OPEN REGIME

FORCES OF THE OPEN REGIME, HUYNH HUU HIEN, WILL NOT GO TO THE OPEN REGIME

8. THE OPEN REGIME WILL SEND THE ARVE TO HIEN BY 0100 THE NEXT DAY. ONCE THE ARVE IS RECEIVED, THE OPEN REGIME WILL BE BACKHOME IN THREE MONTHS.

THE ARVE MUST NOT BE IMAGINED IN THE FIGHTING REGIME

LOCK YOURSELF OUT OF THE OPEN REGIME. THIS IS TO GIVE THAT THE ARVE (ARMY) OFFICES CONCERNING THE SECURITY OF THE ARVE

8. ON 30 NOVEMBER 1968, THAT BOOK TO A UNKNOWN HELPER

LOCK YOURSELF OUT OF THE OPEN REGIME

AND 30 NOVEMBER 1968, WHICH IS TO DEVIAUT THE COMMUNIST MILITARY

AND 30 NOVEMBER 1968, DELEGATION TO THE INTERIM COMINT COMMITTEE

WHICH IS TO ACCORDING TO ARVE, WHICH CONCERN WITH THE COMMUNIST

COMINT, WHO DID NOT GIVE THE SOURCE OF HIS INFORMATION CONCERNING

END OF MESSAGE

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